

Día de los niños, Día de los libros

- What is Día de los niños, Día de los libros?
- Where can I find more information about this holiday?
- What is "If I Can Read, I Can Do Anything" doing to celebrate?
... and more!

Día de los niños, Día de los libros: Celebrating children and books since 1996

Día de los niños, Día de los libros has been observed as a Bilingual Literacy Day on April 30th since 1996. It is a celebration of bilingual readers, linking all children with books, languages and cultures. While it began in Spanish-speaking communities, Día promotes literacy, reading and books for children of all linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

In 1996 teachers and librarians in the Southwest, with the active support of author and poet Pat Mora, began creating literacy activities to commemorate April 30 as a day for children, books and language. The National Association for Bilingual Education formally established the holiday in 1997, and the Texas State Library and Archives Commission and REFORMA, the National Association to Promote Library and

Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish Speaking, have contributed to the growth of the event. Día is currently celebrated at libraries, schools and cultural centers in Florida, Texas, Utah, California and Oregon.

Many websites offer advice and information for planning Día activities (see

below). Events have included everything from dancing, storytelling, arts and crafts, music, food, community fairs and puppet shows to workshops on bilingual reading and family learning for children, students, educators and parents. In the inclusive spirit of Día, many celebrations involve a wide variety of community members: elders, high school students, English- and non-English-speaking parents, young children and local authors. These events bring communities together around books and reading, spotlighting the power of being bilingual.

In a letter on her website Pat Mora writes that "April 30th is a celebration of a year-long commitment." "If I Can Read, I Can Do Anything" is delighted to be a part of this commitment—and this celebration.



A Día illustration from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission

Where can I find more information about Día de los niños, Día de los libros?

- Pat Mora, a Texas based author and poet, has lots of Día de los niños, Día de los libros information and resources on her website.
<http://www.patmora.com>
- The Texas State Library and Archives Commission offers Día resources, including songs, activities, and information about Spanish/English books through their services to librarians.
<http://castor.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/projects/ninos/>
- REFORMA, the National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish-Speaking, has a Día page that lists programs in various communities, activities and resources.
<http://cnet.ucr.edu/library/reforma/resources/ninos/dia.html>
- For quick access to these sites and more, plus notes on what we're doing to celebrate Día, check out the "If I Can Read, I Can Do Anything" activities page.
<http://www.gslis.utexas.edu/~ifcan/activities/activities.html>



“If I Can Read, I Can Do Anything” Celebrates Día on April 30, 2001!

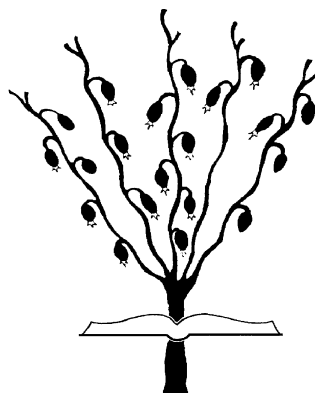
To honor our ongoing commitment to children, literacy, books, reading and the preservation of language and culture, “If I Can Read, I Can Do Anything” is proud to celebrate Día de los niños, Día de los libros with the schools involved in the project. This is the second year of the project, but it will be our first celebration of Día!

On April 30 we will host a chat room for any 4Directions schools who want to participate. We would like for participants to share special cultural words and stories, talk about Native heroes and Native history, recommend books for each other and tell stories. Scary stories are always fun to share!

We’re also sending two books to each school (some schools have already received their copies): [A Man Called Raven](#), written by Richard Van Camp and illustrated by George Littlechild and [The People Shall Continue](#),

written by Simon Ortiz and illustrated by Sharol Graves. [A Man Called Raven](#) is about two brothers learning about nature and tradition from a mysterious elder. [The People Shall Continue](#) describes the interactions between Native and non-Native peoples in the rhythms of traditional oral narrative. We encourage you to share these books at your schools on April 30.

You may want to plan your own celebrations for Día as well. To get you started, here’s a quick list of ideas from



Maybe next year . . .

There’s only so much you can do, we know. But if you and your students enjoy celebrating Día this year, start thinking about next year! Here are some ideas for possible Día celebrations for “If I Can Read” project schools:

- **Exchange “Culture Boxes” between schools.** Schools or individual classes could create boxes that represent who they are, and then exchange those boxes with other project schools. These boxes might include typical greetings, descriptions of special school or cultural ceremonies, calendars of school events, stories, legends, games, and favorite recipes.
- **Build the Cultural Exchange section of the “If I Can Read” website.**

All of the components of the Culture Boxes could be showcased on the project website. We’ve started with a small collection of words and phrases from some Native languages—we welcome suggestions from students about other things they would like to share with project schools.

- **Share artwork through a poster or bookmark exchange.**



REFORMA, NABE, TSLAC and Pat Mora:

- Make planning intergenerational
- Invite parents and family members who speak languages other than English to share bilingual stories and games
- Assist young people in writing bilingual stories and books
- Collect traditional songs, recipes, games and sayings from parents and children
- Look at the websites mentioned on the previous page for more ideas. Be sure to send copies of any artwork, poetry or stories to us—we’ll feature it on the website! Keep checking the website for up-to-the-minute information on Día celebrations: <http://www.gslis.utexas.edu/ifican/activities/activities.html>

Individual students, groups or classes could submit their visual representations of reading and books. We could create bookmarks and/or posters from this artwork to distribute to participating schools.

We’ve got lots of ideas. What would you like to do to celebrate Día de los niños, Día de los libros? Let us know so we can start early to plan a meaningful celebration for April 30, 2002!

Email framberg@hotmail.com, or send your ideas to the project director, Dr. Lorie Roy, at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, The University of Texas at Austin, SZB 564, Austin, TX, 78712-1276. Email her at loriene@gslis.utexas.edu

On April 30, 2001, join “If I Can Read, I Can Do Anything” in a celebration of children, literacy and culture!